

RE-HOMING MATTERS- SAFELY SELLING YOUR HORSE

from [Serenity Equine Rescue and Rehabilitation](#)

Rescues get frequent calls asking for assistance in re-homing people's horses. Many want us to take them into our rescue and 'find them a good home' but our mission is to rescue horses that are ill, neglected, abandoned and truly need our help. For that reason, we have worked hard to create this compilation of information to assist horse owners in our area find their horse a new home that will last.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

- Determine if you really want to find a new home for your horse- can you lease him/her out or find a way to make it work financially? Consider your commitment to this pet.
- Be realistic about your price- the market is slow, and chances are you aren't going to get back any investment.
- Be honest about your horse's condition. Many horses end up at auction or abandoned because someone wasn't being up front about behavioral issues, soundness, or capabilities. Some estimate that 1/3rd of the horses that go to auction these days go to slaughter.
- Screen potential buyers- ask about the location and conditions of their facility, what they plan to do with the horse . Visit the facility if you can.
- Get cash- payment plans and other arrangements require a private treaty to be legal. If you agree to take payments put it in writing (see TERMS section below)!

WHERE TO ADVERTISE

Where can you go to sell? You can pay to run an ad in the [Little Nickel](#), the [Seattle Times](#), the [PI](#) (NW Source), or the [Reporter](#) papers. Post ads with photos at all of your local feed stores, and grocery stores with bulletin boards. Be sure your poster includes the basics and price.

Free online ads- place a free online ad at any of these sites. Most offer paid upgrades to add photos, which may have your horse sell faster.

www.dreamhorse.com
www.horsefinders.com
www.warmbloods-for-sale.com
www.yardandgroom.com
www.2buyhorses.com
www.equine.com
www.horseville.com
www.equinehits.com

www.horse.com/classifieds
www.horseweb.com
www.theequineclassifieds.com
www.freehorseads.com
www.horsesonline.org
www.agdirect.com
www.equibus.com
www.horsetrader.com

www.donatemyhorse.com
www.horsequest.com
www.liverystable.net/index.php
<http://www.horsetopia.com/>
www.netequestrian.com
www.flyingchanges.com
www.region6.org
<http://horsesacrossamerica.com/>

RESPONDING TO INQUIRIES

Be ready to promptly answer calls and emails. People are going to want to know: any information from the Suggested Details list that (below) you did not include. They'll also ask how long you've had the horse, why you are selling and if he has any health issues. It may be good to save a copy of your first few responses to copy/paste into additional ones, since many people ask the same questions.

WRITING THE AD

Your ad: photo ads usually cost money (\$10 and up per site) but also tend to bring a lot more attention to your ad. Be sure take the time to really describe your horse- a description that is 10 sentences long is going to garner more interest than a one sentence blurb. The market is saturated with horses- tell what makes your horse different, what made you fall in love with your horse...

The more honest you are, the more likely you are to actually sell the horse rather than deal with a bunch of lookers AND the more likely your horse is to find a home where he/she will stay. Use words like 'potential' with caution- have you ever tried the horse at the 'potential' discipline?

Suggested Details

- Name
- Registered name
- Breed
- Height
- Broke to ride? Be sure to note if he/she is green or rusty from not being ridden. Remember, potential buyers will want to ride the horse if you've advertised him as broke.
- Disciplines- (English, western, trail, gaming- be specific about what he has done.)
- Experience (trails, shows, sports, etc)
- Basics- does he load, trailer, clip, bathe, and stand for farrier?
- Is he current on shots, worming, feet, teeth?
- Any injuries/illness (current or healed) or any limitations to what the horse can do
- Any professional training?
- Behavior- any red flags (bite/kick, prefers men or women, aggressive to other horses, hates arena work, loves trails, loves water, etc)

A good potential buyer is going to ask for all of the above information (and check on it- looking at teeth and records) so be ready to answer.

Honesty when selling/re-homing can be the difference between a forever home and a pit stop on your pet's way to the auction. Be sure to LISTEN to what the potential buyer is going to do with the horse. If your horse hates water, and they want a trail horse- discuss with them the potential challenge of getting him to endure water obstacles.

PHOTOS

Photos - take a photos of your horse clean, brushed, and without tack so prospective buyers can see his/her conformation. Ideally take one from front, back, left and right side. Take additional photos of horse being ridden - even better is video of the horse working. Upload video to a service like youtube and just email a link to your video.

Remember, photos and videos are part of your horse's resume so don't use unattractive pictures and/or videos of him that are not flattering. Use your good tack- be sure it is clean and fits well. You do not need to coax your horse into tricks or unsafe situations to 'show off' a personality (a good buyer does not need pictures of you standing on your horse to believe he is trained and calm). Ask a friend to help you; animal photos are better done without trying to use self timers.

THE MEETING/TEST RIDE

- Have them sign a release before they test ride your horse. Unfortunately it is a very litigious society that we live in.
- Have the horse cleaned up and groomed
- Be sure you have space for them to ride- if you have nowhere on your property, haul out somewhere to meet them
- They may want you to ride first, to watch, before they do- be sure you are dressed and ready to ride
- If your horse is due for shoeing or a trim be sure it is done before the meeting- you never get to change the first impression.
- Do not ever medicate, sedate or tranquilize a horse before you show him to a potential buyer- they will notice (signs are visible to those who know) or they will buy the horse under false pretenses.
- Remember- even if you've talked online or by phone, a potential buyer is a stranger and should be treated like one. Do not leave valuables out, invite them into your home without supervision or offer information that could tempt someone to commit a crime. It's also best to have a buddy with you for safety reasons.
- Be sure to provide any information that has not already been discussed and ask if they have any questions.

TERMS

Consider in advance how much you are willing to reduce your price (if offered a lower amount) and if you are willing to accept trades or terms. Planning ahead will help ensure that you don't get the short end of the stick.

If you decide to allow 'terms' (payments, etc) please remember that getting money from someone once the horse has gone home can be tricky- many horse owners have been left empty handed in these situations, use a written contract signed by both parties (preferably notarized) and consider how you'd handle no payment in case it happens- can you afford an attorney to collect your money or are you prepared to not be paid (worst case scenario).

Do you want the horse back if it doesn't work out? Discuss that before the horse leaves your farm. If you're concerned, get it in writing. Many horses at auction and/or on the feedlot were once someone's treasured pet.

OTHER TIPS

If your horse is registered be sure to located his/her paperwork (registration, vet records, etc). You can find your horse a forever home with a little effort, but it's worth it for his safety, and yours. Best of luck!